

**Remarks**

The Office Action dated March 10, 2005, has been carefully considered.

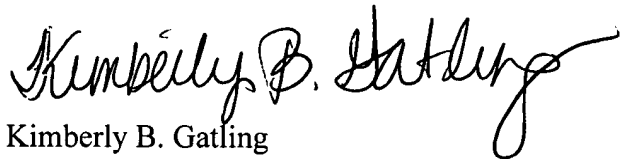
The Office Action rejects claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nordegren, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,011,838).

Nordegren is directed towards a machine for milking cows that is controlled in predetermined phases, namely, a stimulation phase, a milking phase, a post-milking phase, and a switch-off phase. As described in Column 7, line 12 through Column 8, line 29, the duration of each phase depends on the rate of milk flow and predetermined time lapse parameters. As further shown in Figure 7, the milking machine of Nordegren teaches a continuous milking process wherein the machine shifts from one phase to the next without any interruption in the stimulating/milking process. There is no teaching or suggestion in Nordegren to provide a phase without any stimulation between any of the phases taught in the reference.

Claim 1 is amended herein to more clearly recite a method for milking animals wherein a phase without any stimulation occurs between the stimulating step and the milking step. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent Claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Nordegren. Dependent Claims 2-6 are patentable at least for the same reasons regarding independent Claim 1.

In light of the amendment and remarks presented herein, Applicants submit that Claims 1-6 of the application are in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully request such action. If, however, any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's counsel at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



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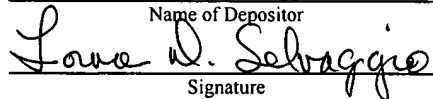
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